TL 1265

PROPOSAL FOR THE FIFTEENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INVASION OF EAST TIMOR

A meeting on September 26, 1990, of representatives from East Timorese organisations, Australian solidarity groups and a number of concerned individuals, agreed that this important anniversary should be commemorated in a peaceful and non-political ceremony on the evening of December 7.

The meeting proposed that the commemoration should take place in the vicinity of the Shrine of Remembrance and the small park on St Kilda Road. The ceremony may include the following components.

- old soldiers from the 2nd/2nd and/or the 2nd/4th would lay a wreath in memory of both Australians and East Timorese who died during the Second World War, and light a torch from the eternal flame at the Shrine of Remembrance
- they would hand the torch ceremonially to East Timorese children in national dress who would bring it down the hill to where thousands of East Timorese and Australian supporters would be waiting with unlit candles;
- the children would light all the candles with the eternal flame ;
- the East Timorese cultural group would perform the mourning dance;
- the religious component of the commemoration would be highlighted with the involvement of a prominent priest;
- the names of East Timorese martyrs would be symbolically burned or scattered so their spirits could rise to heaven;
- traditional song and music would be very important;
- a commemorative tree would be planted in the park, using soil, rock and water from East Timor;
- East Timorese people who wished to, would wear black (or yellow) sheets, or cover their faces in some other way, to prevent identification and to reduce the fear of retaliation on family members still in Timor by Indonesian authorities;
- all the East Timorese groups would be represented, especially the elderly and they would be given a chance to speak at the ceremony;
- Australian speakers would be asked to join those of Timorese descent to address the crowd in the park;
- the Portuguese consul and community would be asked to participate;
- a special Timorese name would be given to the event and used in all promotion. Tane Rai Timor was one name suggested. (Other suggestions are welcome.)
- As broad a cross section of the Australian community as possible would be invited to share in this ceremony.

The committee welcomes any new ideas that would make this commemoration a very special event for everyone involved.

For more information, please contact:

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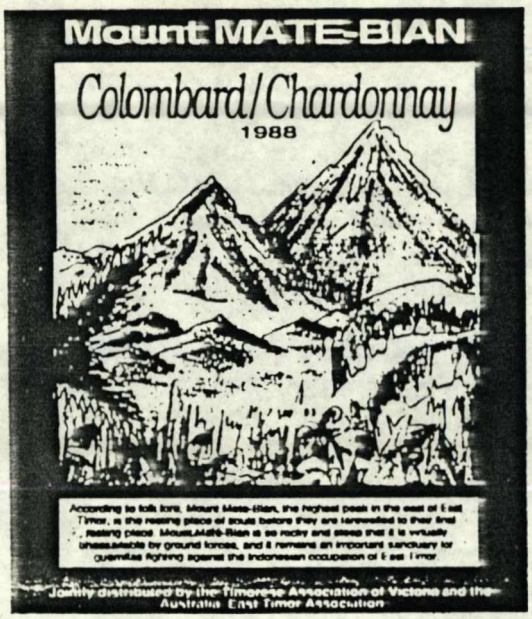
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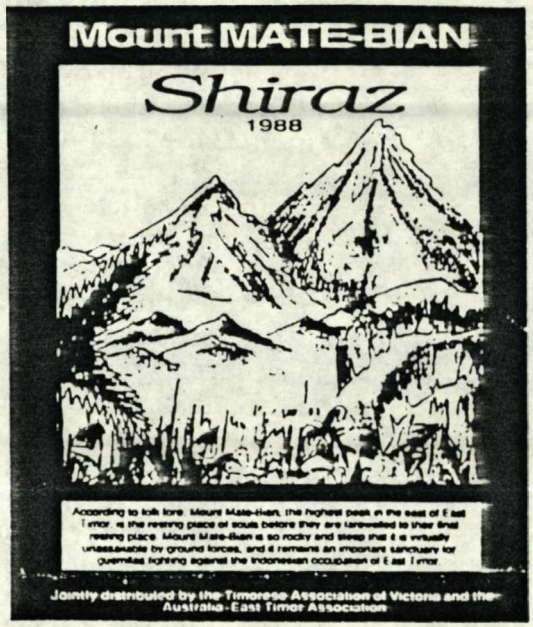
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